International Student Academic Progress

Policy / Procedure Number: 006

1. Policy

This policy/procedure supports ‘Standard 10 – Monitoring Course Progress’ of the ‘National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities & Providers of Education & Training to Overseas Students 2007’

The following procedures will ensure that all students’ academic performance is monitored and students are given every opportunity to achieve the required academic progress for each course they are enrolled in. This required academic progress is identified by the number of units assessed as ‘Competent’ within one study period – that is, a student must be deemed ‘Competent’ in at least 50% of the total number of units assessed throughout a study period.

A student who does not achieve this 50% competency rate for two consecutive study periods shall be considered in breach of this academic progress requirement. The following procedures outline a process to ensure that students are made aware and given opportunities to rectify the situation at the following stages of academic non-progression:

- Notified when close to falling below the required academic performance for a single study period
- 1st Warning when falling below the required academic performance for single study period
- 2nd Warning when close to not achieving the required academic performance for a consecutive study period

Where students have been identified as at risk of non-compliance of this requirement, all possible efforts shall be made to ensure that the student is given the opportunity to rectify their position, but where this is not possible their non-compliance of this requirement must be reported to the Department of Education, Science & Training (DEEWR) / Department of Immigration & Citizenship (DIAC) via PRISMS.

It allows for early detection of poor academic results and enables the AITT and the students an opportunity to rectify the situation before reporting the breach of the academic performance requirement to DEEWR / DIAC.

All staff is made aware of the requirements of this policy through regular meetings and updates and continuous improvement practices. Students are made aware of the academic progress requirements through enrolment processes and throughout the program.
2. **Procedure**

2.1 **Recording Student Academic performance**

The student’s academic performance shall be recorded using the ‘Student Academic Record Sheet’. This spreadsheet will calculate the projected academic progress for the study period, based on the total number of units that are required to be assessed and the outcome of these assessments.

All students shall be deemed ‘Competent (C)’ or ‘Not Yet Competent (NYC)’ for each unit within the qualification they are enrolled and complete. The assessment shall be conducted by qualified trainers / assessors using the AITT’s assessment tools/methods and recording processes as required. All academic results are entered into the Students Records Management System by the Student Administration department.

It is the responsibility of the Student Administration department to ensure that the ‘Student Academic Record Sheet’ is also updated after each assessment is completed and recorded.

**Work / Practical / Field Placements**

Australian Institute of Technical Training will be organising the Student field placement after consultations with individual students and Trainers and Welfare organisation where required. It is the responsibility of students to attend to placements and if students do not attend to their practical placements, they will be responsible for the unsuccessful completion of their qualification.

2.2 **Monitoring Student Academic Performance**

The Student Administration Staff will monitor student academic performance via the ‘Student Academic Performance Record Sheet’ and report any issues, as outlined below, to the Registrar:

a. The student has been deemed ‘not yet competent’ in 50% or more of the units attempted in any one study period, or

b. Current course load will prevent the student from completing the course within the expected duration as specified on the student’s CoE.

c. Where a trainer/ assessor identifies that student is at risk of making unsatisfactory course before the end of the study period.
Appropriate follow-up action will be implemented where the student is at the risk of not maintaining satisfactory course progress. The student will be contacted by the Student Support Officer by telephone, email or mail and invite to a meeting to develop an action plan, which assist to improve student's academic performance. The student need to discuss the appropriation of the course selection and opportunities for reassessment in subjects previously been assessed as ‘not yet competent’. Students must be aware that unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive study period will be reposted to DIAC by AITT and can lead to cancellation of visa (depending on the outcome of any appeal process if accessed).

The Campus Manager or trainer will work with the student to ensure that the discussed action plan is implemented and produces higher levels of academic performance. Where the intervention strategy fails to promote student’s academic performance a further meeting will be arranged to discuss additional support / counselling.

Without a reasonable cause for ongoing underperformance (i.e. unable to achieve more than 50% unsatisfactory course progress for two consecutive study periods), the student support officer will refer the case to the Chief Executive Officer.

However, the reasonable cause is compassionate or compelling circumstances that are beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student’s capacity and/ or ability to progress through course. These could include but are not limited to:

a. Serious illness to injury, where a medical certificate stages that the student was unable to attend classes
b. Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible death certificate should be provided).
c. Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impact on their studies.
d. A traumatic experience which could include but not limited to:
   i. Involvement in or witnessing of an accident, or
   ii. A crime committed against the student, or
   iii. The student has been witness to a crime and that has impact on the student (these cases should be supported by the police or psychologist’s report).

Where AITT has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory course progress, AITT will notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory course progress. The written notice will inform the student that he or she is able to access the AITT’s complaints and appeals process and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.

Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working days period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the registered provider, AITT will notify the Secretary of DEEWR through PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable.
Intervention Strategies (See Appendix A)

**Introduction:** Intervention Strategies to be put in place may incorporate the following:

- Student will be advised to attend the Tutorial Sessions
- Mentoring programs will be implemented
- Counseling will be arranged for the student

Reduction of load may be advised but the student will be advised to complete the course in the expected duration and he/she cannot exceed duration beyond the specified course duration on CRICOS.

Once per month the Student Administration Staff will review the academic progress of all students and monitor the following points:

- **Any student falls below 60% academic progress for a single study period**
  - Student’s shall be sent a Notification Letter indicating that they have fallen below 60% academic performance for the study period to date, and failure to achieve Competency in further units undertaken the current study period may result in failing to achieve academic progress for the study period. Failing to achieve this academic progression in two consecutive study periods will be deemed in breach of Visa requirements and be reported to DIAC. The students are given the opportunity to be counselled in their progress if required. (See Appendix A)

- **When a student’s projected academic progress falls below 50% for a single study period**
  - When a student’s academic progress falls below 50% for a single study period the Student Administration staff shall notify the Registrar and a ‘1st Warning Letter’ shall be sent indicating the student has to contact the college and organise an appointment with the Registrar to discuss their poor academic progress and strategies to ensure they stay above the 50% academic progress requirement for the following Study period. (Appendix B)

  If the student does not respond within 7 days the Student Administration staff will attempt to contact the student via telephone. If this fails the matter shall be forwarded to the Registrar

- **Any student who is below 75% academic progress in their current study period after falling below 50% in their previous study period**
  - Student’s shall be sent a ‘2nd Warning Letter’ notifying them they are at risk of breaching their requirement to maintain academic progression for each study period they are enrolled. They are informed they have fallen below 75% academic progress in the current study period after falling below the required academic progression in the previous study period. They are informed that if they fall below the required academic progression in two consecutive study periods they will be reported to DIAC.

  They are also informed that are required to organise an appointment with the Registrar to discuss their poor academic progress and strategies to ensure they stay above the 50% Academic requirement for the study period. (See Appendix C)
If the student does not respond within 7 days the Student Administration Manager will attempt to contact the student via telephone. If this method of contact fails the matter shall be forwarded to the Registrar.

- **When a student’s projected academic progress falls below 50% for 2 consecutive study periods**
  - The student shall be sent a ‘Breach Recorded’ letter indicating they are going to be reported to DIAC for unsatisfactory academic progress in their course of study. They are informed that this has occurred as they have failed to be deemed Competent in more than 50% for two consecutive study periods. They are also informed of their ability to access the appeals and complaints process and have 20 working days to do so. (Appendix D)
  - If the student does not go through any appeal or complaint process within 20 working days, the report shall be submitted via PRISMS.

**Note:** Where there are less than 3 units to be assessed for the study period, and a student is deemed NYC in a single unit, the student shall only be sent only the 1st Warning Letter. This is due to the fact that if they are deemed NYC in more than 1 unit they will fall below the 50% requirement for the study period.

### 2.3 Reporting ‘Breach of Student Academic performance’

All students who fall below 50% academic progress requirement and have no supporting reasons shall be reported via PRISMS to DIAC for a breach of their Visa condition.

**NOTE:** If the student has not maintained satisfactory course progress up to the time of cancelation or transfer the process of reporting the student DIAC will continue, even though the student is no longer officially enrolled with the provider.

Students have 20 working days from the date the ‘Breach Recorded’ letter is processed to appeal the decision of their academic non-performance. If they do not choose to use this option then they shall be reported as indicated.

This process of reporting breaches into PRISMS is the responsibility of the CEO who monitors the projected academic progress fortnightly. They are also supported by the monitoring conducted by the Registrar.

A copy of all letters, details of phone calls made, and any reports are to be kept in the student files.
Appendix A-AITT Intervention Strategy

Monitoring Course Progression Guidelines

Monitoring Course Progress requires AITT to have a documented intervention strategy.

This intervention strategy specifies the procedures for identifying and assisting students at risk of not meeting the required course progress of 50% of units undertaken in any study period. This intervention strategy must be made available to staff and students.

The intervention strategy guidelines have been produced to assist the Institute in determining how to assist students at risk of not satisfactorily meeting course progress requirements as required by the Monitoring Student Academic Progress policy and procedures.

AITT would develop their intervention strategy for each student on a case by case basis. These guidelines include suggested actions, however these suggested actions are not exhaustive.

Intervention Strategy Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student has been assessed as at risk of not meeting course progress requirements</td>
<td>Registrar/ Campus Manager</td>
<td>Assessment undertaken according to Monitoring International student Academic progress policy and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention Strategy activated</td>
<td>Registrar/ Campus Manager</td>
<td>Student must be contacted by letter, email or personal contact. Student should be advised that they are currently at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress. Student must meet to discuss an intervention strategy. A student’s enrolment cannot be cancelled due to not meeting satisfactory course progression if an intervention strategy has not been activated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailoring of Intervention Strategy</td>
<td>Registrar/ Campus Manager</td>
<td>Intervention Strategies should be tailored to suit each individual student’s needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Intervention Strategies | Registrar/ Campus Manager | Intervention strategies can cover, but not limited to:  
| --- | --- | ---  
| | | • Transition support  
| | | • English language support  
| | | • Study skills support  
| | | • Welfare support  
| | | • Reduction in course load  
| Intervention Strategy- Transition support | Registrar/ Campus Manager / Student Counsellor | Students requiring transition support may be directed to the International Student Support Officer for assistance with:  
| | | • Accommodation problems  
| | | • Cultural shock, home sickness  
| | | • Local customs and etiquette  
| | | • Balancing work commitments and studies  
| Intervention Strategy- English Language Support | Registrar/ Campus Manager / Student Counsellor | Students requiring assistance with English language support may be directed to English Language Trainer. Students can receive assistance in:  
| | | • Grammar  
| | | • Oral  
| | | • Formatting  
| | | • Research skills presentations  
| | | • Presentations  
| | | Concurrently with their normal studies.  
| Intervention Strategy- Study skills support | Registrar/ Campus Manager / Student Counsellor | Students requiring assistance with study skills may be directed to Counsellor or Campus manager.  
| | | Students can receive assistance in:  
| | | • Assessment expectations (e.g. due dates)  
| | | • Exam preparations  
| | | • Time management  
| | | • Class attendance and participation  
| | | • Academic referencing and plagiarism  
| | | • Reading and note taking skills  
| | | • Research, web searching, and library skills  
| Intervention Strategy- Welfare support | Registrar/ Campus Manager / Student Counsellor | Students may be directed to Student support officer, Doctor or Counsellor to receive assistance with personal issues influencing progress  

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**Version No.:** V3.1  
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention strategy - Reduction in course load</th>
<th>Registrar/ Campus Manager / Student Counsellor</th>
<th>Where it is believed the above intervention strategies will not assist a student in meeting satisfactory course progression a reduction in course load may be considered. Students must complete their studies within the duration of their Confirmation of enrolment (CoE) however if an approved intervention strategy has been implemented students may apply for a visa extension if they cannot catch up through study in non-compulsory period. Registrar to be advised if student requires changes to length of CoE.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention strategy - Change of course</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>A student may transfer to a suitable alternative course as part of an intervention strategy. Registrar must be notified as student will be required to complete new application and receive a new Offer of enrolment and sign a new Enrolment Acceptance Agreement. Registrar will then cancel the original CoE and issue a new CoE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Plan</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>An amended study plan may be required for a student who has an intervention strategy in place. The student must receive a copy of the amended study plan and a copy must be in student’s file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of Intervention strategy</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Documentary evidence of the measures implemented should be kept in student’s file. Student should receive a copy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When an intervention strategy has been activated for a student, documentation must be kept in the student’s file for all follow up meetings, support provided and strategies undertaken by the student.

If it is noted that the student is not following the intervention strategy in place for the student it is recommended that the student is sent a letter reminding the student that if they do not meet academic progress requirements he/she will be reported to DEEWR and DIAC which may result in their student visa being cancelled.
DIISRTE – DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures for CRICOS Providers of VET Courses

This policy must be read in conjunction with the adjoining explanatory notes

1. The National Code 2007
1.1 Under Standard 11.2 of the National Code 2007, a provider who implements the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures for its vocational education and training (VET) courses is not required for ESOS purposes to monitor attendance for those courses.

2. Indicating the decision to implement the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures
2.1 A provider who chooses to implement the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures must implement the policy and procedures for all of its CRICOS registered VET courses. The provider registers this choice through PRISMS.

3. Policy
3.1 The provider must monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.

3.2 The provider must assess each student’s progress at the end of each compulsory study period. While the length of a study period is determined by the provider, study periods are usually terms or semesters. Ten weeks is usually considered the minimum length of time in which it is reasonable for the provider to make an assessment of a student’s course progress. For the purposes of this policy, the maximum length for a study period is six months.

Where a provider does not divide courses into study periods, course progress must be monitored at least every six months.

3.3 Unsatisfactory progress is defined as not successfully completing or demonstrating competency in at least 50% of the course requirements in that study period.

The provider must define course requirements for each study period and be able to identify when a student has not passed or demonstrated competency in 50% or more of the course requirements. The course requirements for each study period must also be made clear to the student at the start of the course, or if variable, each study period.

3.4 The provider must have an intervention strategy for any student who is not making satisfactory course progress. It must be made available to staff and students and must specify:
   i. procedures for contacting and counselling students;
   ii. strategies to assist identified students to achieve satisfactory course progress; and
   iii. the process by which the intervention strategy is activated.

3.5 The intervention strategy must include provisions for:
   i. where appropriate, advising students on the suitability of the course in which they are enrolled;
ii. assisting students by advising of opportunities for the students to be reassessed for tasks in units or subjects they had previously failed, or demonstrate the necessary competency in areas in which they had not been previously able to demonstrate competency; and

iii. advising students that unsatisfactory course progress in two consecutive study periods for a course could lead to the student being reported to DIAC and cancellation of his or her visa, depending on the outcome of any appeals process.

3.6 At the end of each compulsory study period, students must be assessed against the course progress policy. If a student is identified for the first time as not making satisfactory course progress, the intervention strategy as outlined in 3.4 is implemented. The intervention strategy must be activated within the first four weeks of the following study period.

However, if a provider identifies that a student is at risk of making unsatisfactory course progress before the end of the study period, the provider is encouraged to implement its intervention strategy as early as practicable.

3.7 If a student is identified as not making satisfactory course progress in a second consecutive compulsory study period in a course, the provider must notify the student of its intention to report the student to DIAC for unsatisfactory progress. The provider does this through the written notice described in 3.8.

3.8 The written notice (of intention to report the student for unsatisfactory progress) must inform the student that he or she is able to access the registered provider’s complaints and appeals process under Standard 8 and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so. A student may appeal on the following grounds:

i. provider’s failure to record or calculate a student’s marks accurately,
ii. compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
iii. provider has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.

3.9 Where the student’s appeal is successful, the outcomes may vary according to the findings of the appeals process.

i. If the appeal shows that there was an error in calculation, and the student actually made satisfactory course progress (successfully completed more than 50% of the course requirements for that study period), the provider does not report the student, and there is no requirement for intervention.

ii. If the appeals process shows that the student has not made satisfactory progress, but there are compassionate or compelling reasons for the lack of progress, ongoing support must be provided to the student through the provider’s intervention strategy, and the provider does not report the student. [See adjoining explanatory notes]

3.10 Where:

i. the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period,

ii. the student withdraws from the process, or

iii. the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the registered provider (ie. the student’s appeal was unsuccessful) the registered provider must notify the Secretary of DIISRTE through PRISMS as soon as practicable of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress.
4. Procedures
The administrative arrangements and student management systems will vary between providers, as will providers’ approaches to the procedures for implementing the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy.

Consequently, each provider who chooses to implement the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy must write a procedure which demonstrates how the policy will be implemented. This document must be made available to staff and students (in paper or electronic form) together with a copy of this policy.

When creating the procedures document, providers are advised to incorporate their answers to the following questions:

**WHO is responsible for each of the steps?**
For example, who is responsible for defining the workload for the study period, checking progress, deciding that the student is at risk, implementing the intervention strategy, informing the student of the provider’s intention to report, hearing an appeal, and reporting the student through PRISMS? Will different staff be required to take responsibility for the different steps? Will all staff involved be responsible for maintaining records of their part in the process, or will this be managed centrally?

**WHEN will each step take place?**
Will the intervention strategy be implemented earlier than the end of the study period or is the entire study period required in order to assess the student’s progress? The student must be allowed 20 working days in which to initiate a complaint or appeal – has this requirement been considered when drafting the procedures document?

**HOW will each step take place?**
Will the student management system automatically alert staff to students at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, or will progress need to be checked manually? How will students be informed of the provider’s concern for the student’s progress or intention to report the student? Are there pro forma letters which can be modified manually or generated by the system? How and where will records of interventions, appeals processes and reporting be maintained?
Indicating the decision to implement the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures

- To indicate the decision to implement the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures, the provider must do so through PRISMS. The provider does this by clicking the ‘Yes’ button for the field ‘DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy & Procedure implemented?’

The provider’s level of access to PRISMS will determine where this field will appear.
- Providers with CoE Create or CoE Agent access will find the field on the ‘Provider Information’ tab of the ‘Organisation Details’ screen.
- Providers with CoE Administrator access will find the field on the ‘Summary’ tab of the ‘View/Edit Provider’ screen.

- If a provider is considering returning to monitoring attendance rather than implementing the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy and Procedures, the provider needs to bear in mind the following:
  - How will students be informed of the change to the course progress policy? and
  - How will the change impact on the organisation and delivery of courses that are currently being delivered under the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy?

- If a provider changes its mind and no longer wishes to follow the DIISRTE-DIAC Course Progress Policy, it registers the change in PRISMS by changing the answer to the relevant field to ‘No’. A record is kept in PRISMS if the provider has chosen to use the DIISRTE-DIAC Approved Course Progress Policy and if it changes its mind after indicating it would use the policy.

- Good practice is that providers do not commence a new course progress policy until the beginning of a study period and only after students have been informed of the intended change.

The intervention strategy

- Providers must assist students who are at risk of not making satisfactory course progress in accordance with the provider’s documented intervention strategy. Providers need to ensure that they follow their intervention strategy as failure to do so may provide a student with grounds for a successful appeal. Failure to implement the intervention strategy may also constitute a breach of the National Code 2007.

- Providers must make students aware of opportunities and services to assist them if they are identified as at risk of not making satisfactory course progress.

- Providers are advised to keep records of the advice and assistance they give students who have been assisted under the provider’s intervention strategy.

The written notice of intention to report a student for unsatisfactory progress

- Each provider must create its own written notice to report a student for unsatisfactory progress. Providers may wish to refer to a sample notice prepared by DIISRTE, available on the AEI Online website.
Reporting students for unsatisfactory progress

• Reporting a student for unsatisfactory course progress occurs only when the student has been identified as not making satisfactory course progress in two consecutive compulsory study periods, and the student has not made a successful appeal against this assessment.

• Course progress in a non-compulsory study period is to be disregarded when considering whether there has been unsatisfactory progress in two consecutive compulsory study periods.

• If a student is identified for a second, but not consecutive, study period as not making satisfactory course progress, the provider does not report the student for unsatisfactory course progress.

• When a student is reported for unsatisfactory course progress, DIAC will, in all but exceptional circumstances, cancel the student’s visa. DIAC will rely on the provider’s report of unsatisfactory course progress, as the report can not be made until the provider has completed the complaints and appeals process. If a student is dissatisfied with the provision of a complaints and appeals process, the student may lodge a complaint with DIISRTE.

• Section 19(2) of the ESOS Act 2000 requires providers to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress ‘as soon as practicable’ after the breach occurs. Good practice would be to report the student through PRISMS within 5 days of finalising the decision to report (ie. within 5 days of 3.9 i., ii., or iii. occurring).

Compassionate or compelling circumstances

• Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student’s capacity and/or ability to progress through a course. These could include:
  o serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
  o bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
  o major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impacted on their studies
  o a traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to:
    • involvement in or witnessing of an accident or
    • a crime committed against the student or
    • the student has been a witness to a crime and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists’ reports).

Please note that the above are only some of examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. Providers are asked to use their professional judgment and to assess each case on its individual merits. When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, providers should consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim. Providers should keep copies of these documents, together with a record of why the decision was made, in the student’s file.
Erratic course progress as a potential indication of non-bona fide students
• If the provider suspects that a student is not a bona fide student, the provider may cancel the student’s enrolment, as allowed under Standard 13. However, providers must ensure that prior to enrolment students were made aware of the grounds on which cancellation of enrolment may occur, as required under Standard 2.1f. For example, if a provider takes erratic course progress into account in identifying non-bona fide students, erratic progress must be clearly defined and stated prior to enrolment as one of the grounds for cancellation of enrolment. Similarly, if a provider identifies bona fide students on the basis of participation, failure to participate must be clearly stated prior to enrolment as grounds for cancellation of enrolment.

Monitoring course progress for reporting purposes and for completion within the duration
• Standard 9.1 requires the registered provider to have and implement documented policies and procedures for monitoring the course progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified on the student’s CoE. While monitoring progress against the course duration is a separate requirement to monitoring course progress for reporting purposes, there may be some overlap in procedures. For example, a provider’s course progress procedure may require that at the end of each study period, each student’s results are checked to determine course progress for that study period. In order to avoid duplication of effort, at the same time the provider may also check each student’s progress towards completion of the course within the specified duration.